

Hello, my name is Tom McMurtrie. I'm the Solid Waste Coordinator for the City of Ann Arbor.

I don't really understand why we are up here year after year, continuing to discuss the same issue about allowing yard waste into landfills. We continue to make our case each year, convincingly. And yet we keep having to come back to re-state our case. It doesn't make sense.

We have built up a composting industry in Michigan that is the pride of the Midwest. It creates 4 times as many jobs as landfills on a per-ton basis and creates a product that is in high demand. Yet the state legislatures want to pass legislation that is going to decimate this industry. It doesn't make sense.

We have built up a composting industry in Michigan that is competitive. In Ann Arbor, it costs \$18.50 per ton to compost, and the costs are going down each year. It costs \$25.93 per ton to landfill, and the costs are going up each year. Yet if this legislation passes, yard waste will go to landfills, the model will fall apart, and compost costs are bound to go up. It doesn't make sense.

We have taught our residents how to separate their yard waste and leaves from the trash, as a way to reduce community's landfill tip fees and create a useful product. Yet now the state wants to pass legislation that's going to mix it all up again, as a way to save some money in the short term. What are we going to do 10 years down the road, when landfills start filling up and tip fees spike up? Teach residents all over again how to separate their yard waste and leaves from the trash? It's not easy to teach that behavior to everyone. You can't just turn it on and off like a light switch. It doesn't make sense.

Why are we even considering this legislation now? This is short term thinking, that's all about putting extra money in landfill owner's pockets in the short term and raising everyone's costs in the long term. It doesn't make sense.

Where are we going to be 10 years down the road when landfill costs spike up, legislators raise their hands and say we need to do something to reduce our landfill costs. Let's compost more. Yet we won't have the infrastructure in place to do it. You can bet your bottom dollar that it's going to cost more and take a long time to start a compost industry back up, after the industry has been decimated by flip-flopping legislation. It doesn't make sense.

Why are we even considering this legislation, when it's been convincingly proven that putting yard waste into landfills releases far more global warming methane into the environment, even with landfills that have a methane capture system. It doesn't make sense.

Why are we even considering this legislation, when the governor has stated that he wants to increase our recycling rates, and recycling ranks high on everyone's list. This legislation is taking a giant step backwards. It doesn't make sense.

Why are we even considering this legislation, when it has been shown that organics, such as food waste, are a huge portion of what is currently going into the landfill. We should be taking steps to compost more, not compost less. This legislation is a giant step backwards. It doesn't make sense.

Thank you.